DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 299 716 EC 210 795

AUTHOR Gross, Harriet; Gipps, Caroline
TITLE Supporting Warnock's Eighteen Per Cent: Six Case Studies.
SPONS AGENCY London Univ. (England). Inst. of Education.
REPORT NO ISBN-1-85000-142-1
PUB DATE 87
NOTE 214p.; The study was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. For related document, see EC 210 794.
AVAILABLE FROM Falmer Press, Taylor and Francis, Inc., 242 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19106-1906 ($19.00).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Books (010)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Case Studies; Educational Finance; Educational Legislation; Educational Policy; *Educational Practices; Educational Psychology; Elementary Education; Foreign Countries; *Handicap Identification; Individual Needs; Inservice Teacher Education; *Learning Disabilities; Remedial Instruction; *School Districts; *Screening Tests; Special Education; Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS Education Act 1981 (England); England; Wales

ABSTRACT

Detailed case studies are presented of six local education authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales which participated in the Screening and Special Educational Provision Project, a project focusing on the estimated 18 percent of the primary school population who have mild learning difficulties in basic skills. Each LEA's approach to special needs identification and provision is described in terms of the following: support available before the 1981 Education Act, effect of the Act, and cuts in education expenditure; viewpoints of support services, schools, and class teachers; and what the approach offers to the child. Results indicated that all six LEAs had some form of support service, differing in size and prioritization of specific disabling conditions. Financial cuts required that LEA officers use resources more effectively and emphasize more advisory work. It was felt that the 1981 Education Act stressed the role of the class teacher in meeting special needs, increased the number of educational psychologists, and increased awareness of the extent of need. Half the LEAs had a screening program to identify children for special help. Inservice training concerning special needs students was poorly regarded by the teachers. Improved liaison between support services and class teachers was needed. (JDD)

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